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SUBJECT: POST-ELECTION VIOLENCE IN KWAZULU NATAL -- IFP DENIES ACCUSATIONS

¶1. (SBU) On April 27, an African National Congress (ANC) victory parade in KwaSwayimane near Pietermaritzburg ended when assailants opened fire on the crowd leaving one ANC supporter dead and another six injured. Two IFP supporters have been apprehended by police and are being questioned about the attack. In Ulundi, an ANC supporter was stoned by IFP supporters, alleged ANC spokesperson Nomfundo Mcetshwa to Pol/Econ Assistant. Also, in Paulpietersburg, IFP supporters pointed a gun at ANC supporters during an ANC celebration, according to political violence monitor Mary de Haas. de Haas also reported that in Mpongolo an ANC supporter was allegedly shot by an IFP counselor. IFP National Organizer Albert Mncwango, speaking to the Pol/Econ Assistant, however, cautioned against making assumptions about who is responsible for recent events and called upon the ANC to desist from linking recent incidents of violence to the IFP without any proof. de Haas pointed out that the ANC `can be provocative' and may have deliberately chosen to celebrate in traditionally IFP-strong areas. Senior police officials reported to Foreign Service National Investigator, in confidence, that authorities are still investigating the motives for the attacks and have not ruled out that they are politically motivated.

¶2. (SBU) Comment. Since 1994, the IFP has steadily lost power and influence in KZN, and many IFP supporters simply cannot stand to see the ANC celebrate its victory, especially in traditional IFP strongholds. While IFP and ANC leaders have been conciliatory in their post-election remarks, supporters in rural areas still seem to be engaged in a decades-old battle over control. IFP supporters may have committed the recent violent acts, but the ANC is likely responsible for fueling post-election tensions in certain rural areas. End Comment.

DERDERIAN